U.S. Government

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**Summary of Unit**

Students will explore the rights that are legally protected as citizens of the United States. They will simulate and discuss situations in which they would need to use their rights/protections extensively, as to reach a high level of mastery. Students will compare these rights and the responsibilities of US citizens to that of other countries and their people, as well as compare what is currently happening throughout the world to what caused the US to form legal civil rights of all citizens. This unit will also explore how students can make a change throughout their country and world by going into depth on activists such as Martin Luther King Jr. Although the main focus is on civil rights and liberties, we will also focus on what caused us to form these protections by going into the history of activism and revolution within the United States.

**Established Goals**

Maine Learning Results Content Area: Social Studies Standard Label: Civics and Government  
Standard: Students draw on concepts from civics and government to understand political systems, power, authority, governance, civic ideals and practices, and the role of citizens in the community, Maine, the United States, and world. Grade Level Span: Grade 9-Diploma   
Performance Indicators: a, b, c.

***Students will understand that…***

* That there is a difference between the bill of rights, the Constitution, and the civil rights act.
* How rights are very important and how they are protected
* How the context and cause for the Bill of Rights and the Civil Rights Act is similar to what is happening currently in the middle east and Africa

***Essential Questions…***

* How is what is currently happening though out the world similar to what caused us to form civil rights?
* Why were the Bill of Rights and the Civil Rights Act written?
* What are the rights citizens have and how are they protected?

***Students will know…***

* **Important People and Groups** (Martin Luther King Jr., KKK, JFK, Malcom X, the Black Panthers, NAACP, Lyndon B. Johnson, Freedom Riders, Bob Dylan, Rosa Parks)
* **Important Places** (Washington monument, Little Rock, Birmingham, Syria)
* **Terms** (slavery, racism, segregation, activism, protest, march, congress, H.O.R., Judiciary, senate, desegregation, Montgomery Bus Boycott)

***Students will be able to…***

* describe the process by which the civil rights act was created and evolved.
* make meaning of their rights as citizens and the Civil Rights Act as well as the Bill of Rights.
* use their rights to protect themselves.
* compare the causes of the Civil Rights Act and the Bill of Rights to what is currently happening in the middle east and Africa.
* consider that they have the ability to make a change in their country and the world.
* be aware of different kinds of governments and rights of their people.

**Performance Task Overview**

You are a top newscaster at NBC, and the USCIS has asked your team to create a PSA commercial that will air on many networks. This commercial must discuss the benefits of naturalization, particularly the rights gained as a U.S. Citizen, in a professional, educational, and persuasive way. This commercial must be simple enough for English Language learners to understand. If your commercial qualifies, a payment of $25,000 will be made to your team.

**Expectations**

Absences: Attendance is crucial to your success. This class is very project based and packed full of fun information, and if you are not in class you risk falling behind. Yet, I do understand that life happens. Do not wait until class to get what you have missed. Please come to me to get any work or notes on the day you return to school. We will determine when your homework and missed classwork will be due then.   
  
Plagiarism: You must cite every resource you use on any classwork. If you do not give credit you are indeed stealing intellectual property. Any work that contains obvious plagiarism will be counted as a zero, your guardians will be contacted, and the school policy will be followed.   
  
Assignments: Turning in your work on time is very crucial to your success in any classroom. I understand that things come up. Feel free to come to me during or after class, or to send me an email if any problems occur. I am open minded to the fact that emergency's happen and that you may not be able to get stuff turned in on time. We will schedule an agreed time for the work to be due, and can accommodate your needs.  
  
Classroom Expectations: My classroom is meant to be a safe and comfortable place for all students, teachers, and guests. No disrespect, bullying, or harassment will be tolerated. Any hurtful language or actions will have appropriate consequence. In order for class to be fun and exciting there must be a supportive environment. A supportive environment includes listening to others as they talk, and giving others the opportunity to state their thoughts and concerns. I will start off the year with a trust in all of you. Students will be free to leave the room to use the restroom as they please as long as they return within a decent amount of time. If this becomes a problem this privilege will be revoked and students will need to ask me before leaving the room.

**Benchmarks: Total 500 Points**

• **Prezi:** 50 pts A prezi is a creative online presentation. Students will make a Prezi that covers one cause of the Civil Rights Act or for the Bill of Rights. They will research this cause or event deeply and thoroughly. At least two forms of media are required within the Prezi. This project will be graded on creativity as well as content.   
  
• **Glogster:** 50 pts A Glogster is a virtual poster made online. Students will make a Glogster that uses at least two forms of media to document the rights of individuals. They will be given a specific right to research, and will be required to report the meaning of the right, the importance, what caused it, and how it has evolved over time. This project will be graded on creativity as well as content.   
  
• **Script:** 50 pts Students will create a script and make a video that contains situations where they show how to use their rights to protect themselves. This will be a group project that will be worked on within class. Students will simulate at least three situations in which they could use their legal protections. This project will be graded on content as well as creativity and clarity of footage and audio.   
  
• **Podcasts:** 50 pts Students will be making podcasts where they discuss the current situation of other countries and how people there are making a difference. The students will have the option to choose which country they will report on. This will be graded on research and content. Students can go about this anyway that they please. They can pretend to be a newscaster, a witness, or an activist.   
  
• **Blog: 50 pts** (10 points each) Students will keep a blog/journal where they write about how they have or could make a good change in their country or the world. If they cannot or do not feel comfortable writing about themselves, they have the choice to write about activists, and how their simple acts changed the world, as well as someone they may know who made a difference. These blogs will be graded solely on content.   
  
• **Microsoft Publisher:** 50 pts Students will use Microsoft Word/Publisher to make a brochure that reflects on another kind of government and their people’s rights. The students will have the opportunity to choose their own country. They will research their country's governmental system and the rights their citizens have. This brochure will be graded on content and clarity.

* **Final Project:** Movie - 200 pts Students will be making a movie presentation for their final project. In this presentation, students will pretend to be newscasters and report via a PSA commercial on the benefits of naturalization and the rights gained once an immigrant becomes a legal citizen. This project will be graded in two parts: the presentation of the PSA as well as the video itself. The video will be graded on content, clarity, professionalism, persuasiveness, the script, and creativity. The presentation will be graded on preparedness, enthusiasm, listening to other presentations, evaluating your peers, speaking clearly, and eye contact. If any of these may be a problem for you, feel free to see me.

**Grading Scale**

A (93 -100), A- (90 - 92), B+ (87 - 89), B (83 - 86), B- (80 - 82), C+(77 - 79), C (73-76), C- (70 - 72), D+(67 - 69), D (63 - 66), D- (60 - 62), F (0 - 59).